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DEPARTMENT FOR INL, EUR/SE, SA

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SUBJECT: UNODC AND TURKISH POLICE SUPPORT RESUMED U.S.
COUNTERNARCOTICS ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY

¶1. (SBU) Summary. The local rep of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) sought us out to request that the U.S. help fund programs to combat the floods of Afghan opiates that transit Turkey annually. Turkish National Police officials separately suggested that INL funding assist with regional counternarcotics training seminars. End Summary

UNODC Asks USG for Assistance Against Afghan Opiates

¶2. (SBU) Yasemin Kaya, Turkey Office Director for UNODC, requested a meeting to discuss whether the U.S. would be interested in funding some of UNODC's counternarcotics programs in Turkey. She noted that while Turkey is a Major Donor Country in UNODC, it is still eligible to receive bilateral assistance. She said that Turkey can also receive assistance even from UNODC so long as the funding goes toward regional projects.

¶3. (SBU) Kaya explained that UNODC has worked with the GOT to develop 11 project proposals for 2006, the majority of which aim to combat Turkey's narcotics trafficking problem. She said that the GOT recognizes Turkey's role as a major transshipment point and realizes that it cannot tackle the problem on its own. She mentioned that there are only 11 project proposals because she is UNODC's only employee in country. In fact, she said that if she had three assistants, UNODC and the GOT would have been able to come up with "at least 50 projects."

¶4. (SBU) Kaya emphasized that transshipment of Afghan origin opiates are Turkey's biggest narcotics problem. UNODC and the GOT have proposed a project to develop a multi-agency response to the interdiction of drugs on Turkey's eastern border. They plan to spend \$1.5 million on capacity building for the TNP, Jandarma, and Customs. Kaya said that UNODC is "desperately asking for assistance" in this endeavor, and that they're hoping for a group of countries to get together to fund it. She mentioned the UK, the U.S., and France as possible donors, and said that the donor countries would have input into the details of the project plan.

TNP Would Welcome Resumed USG Training Programs

¶ 15. (SBU) Ismail Caliskan, the director of the TNP's State Security Department with whom we used to work closely on the INL-funded programs, told us on March 14 that he would welcome revitalization of INL's counternarcotics program in Turkey. He was particularly interested in leveraging Ankara's excellent training facility, TADOC, for more regional training seminars. He stressed that any future assistance would be most effective if used for training rather than for equipment procurement, since equipment quickly becomes outdated and U.S.-sourced items are often not compatible with locally-purchased equipment. Both Caliskan and Erol Kesinkilic, chief of the Technical Unit at TNP Ankara, felt that the nature of any resumed cooperation would work best if it was more of a partnership, taking into account Turkish law enforcement's development in recent years.

¶ 16. (SBU) TNP, Customs and Jandarma officials have often told DEA they would appreciate and benefit from revived U.S. assistance. Both DEA and FBI at post believe that using Turkey's excellent training facilities and Turkish experience for regional trainings would maximize USG counternarcotics and law enforcement efforts in the region. Indeed, DEA believes there is a risk that Turkey's excellent counternarcotics cooperation might erode over time if INL funding is not restored.

¶ 17. (SBU) There appears to both be a genuine need and desire for INL counternarcotics assistance in Turkey, particularly regionally-directed programs that would help cut off the flow of Afghanistan-origin opiates via Turkey. Turkey is these drugs' principal route to

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world markets. Understanding the requirements of the Leahy Amendment, post will be providing specific proposals in the near future.

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